

# NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

ELIZABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL



KUMYSS TREATMENT IN TUBERCULOSIS.—The *New York and Philadelphia Medical Journal* has an abstract of a paper in a Russian medical journal, the *Roussky Vrach*, which says: "Levashoff's paper is devoted to the consideration of the kumyss treatment of tuberculosis, especially to the status of this question in Russia, where the original kumyss, made from mare's milk, has long been very extensively used as a remedy in consumption. Levashoff points out that the Russian people early recognized the fact that the rational treatment of tuberculosis did not consist in specific medication, but in the improvement of the powers of resistance of the body. This is the object of kumyss feeding, and Levashoff places this therapeutic method at the head of all the public measures which should be adopted in the struggle against the disease in Russia. In the spring and the early summer there is a great annual pilgrimage of consumptives eastward and southward by railroad and down the Volga on steamers. These patients come to drink kumyss in one of the Provinces of Ufa, Samara, Saratov, Orenburg, etc., and the great majority of the patients belong to the less well-situated classes. Levashoff gives statistics that show that over thirty per cent. of consumptives in the first and second stages recover completely on simple kumyss treatment, and that over thirty-seven per cent. are considerably improved. He enters a strong plea for a better organization of kumyss treatment, for provision for medical attendance upon poor consumptives who take this 'cure' now entirely without medical aid, and for a systematic study of the kumyss treatment."

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THE TREATMENT OF PNEUMONIA.—Dr. R. S. Thornton declares, in a paper in *American Medicine*, of which the *Medical Record* gives a synopsis, that pneumonia is a disease which will not submit to cast-iron rules of treatment. It presents a great variety of types. But there are a few indications that are important to be observed in all cases. The chief one of these is rest—both general and local. This means a firm bed. It means the use of the bed-pan, the urine-jar, the feeding-cup. Every muscular movement that can be avoided, must be avoided. The heart must suffer no unnecessary exertion. Rest means especially that there shall be no talking and no visitors. The temperature of the room must be as equable as possible, at sixty-five to seventy-five degrees. The atmosphere should be moistened, especially in winter. As to poultices, they give relief and are welcomed by the patient. But when consolidation has taken place the poultice should be discarded. A smart mustard plaster, the cotton jacket, and the hot-water bag all have their use. It is most important to keep the bowels and kidneys acting freely. Sufficient water must be given. An initial purge is indicated—a dose of calomel, or, better, a saline laxative. The writer then discusses the uses of drugs. Digitalin and strychnine are of special value near and after the time of crisis. He has abandoned the use of alcohol altogether. He emphasizes the value of creosote. It is important that the creosote

or creosote carbonate should be continued throughout convalescence. The probable explanation of its action is that of an internal antiseptic.

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**SULPHUR BATHS.**—P. Roethlisberger presents, in the *Journal of Balneology and Climatology*, the results of his experiments with sulphur baths. He found that in the baths and for a considerable time afterwards the temperature of the rectum showed a marked diminution, whereas the external (axillary) temperature increased or remained stationary in baths varying from 88° to 100° F. In water of 100° to 100½° the heat of the rectum decidedly rose, but dropped below normal after the baths. The number of the heart's pulsations were distinctively diminished in the baths at a temperature of 88° to 93½° F. This effect lasted for some time. The number of pulsations increased in baths of 97° to 100½° F. The blood pressure was very little lowered by the warmer baths, but was increased by the cooler ones. At the very commencement of all baths the number of respirations increased and remained more frequent in the warmer ones. In the cooler baths the respirations became normal again, or even sub-normal, this diminution continuing after the baths. As to nutrition during and after bathing, there was a very marked increase of urea in proportion to the total nitrogen, showing diminution of the xanthin bases, lessening of the acidity of the urine, a decrease of the total phosphates, and augmentation of the total sulphates. There was regular increase of hunger and thirst during bathing. After the cooler baths there was augmentation of muscular strength, and after the warm ones, a diminution of the same.

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**ENURESIS.**—Drs. Maurice Ostheimer and I. Valentine Levi, of Philadelphia, presented this paper at the meeting of the American Medical Association, which is thus epitomized in the *Medical Record*: "It embraced ninety cases of enuresis in children observed in this dispensary and private practice. While there was no one cause of the affection, reduced tone of the vesical sphincter muscle was present in most cases. This was often the result of some antecedent or simultaneous illness. Among the many methods of treatment the writers found that in the vast majority of cases recovery followed the use of the tincture of belladonna in ascending doses in the mild cases, and atropine and strychnine in the intractable cases. The latter treatment, begun with atropine, one-two-hundred-and-fortieth grain, and strychnine, one-four-hundred-and-eightieth grain, to one drop of water, was gradually increased until the incontinence ceased. The highest dose was continued from two to four weeks, and then gradually decreased, so that the entire treatment usually covered from six weeks to three or four months. Fluids were stopped after supper and errors in diet were corrected in all cases."

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**CHANGES IN THE PULSE DUE TO STIMULATION OF SPECIAL SENSES.**—The *Medical Record*, quoting from the *Zentralblatt für innere Medizin*, says: "The effect on the pulse of stimulating the senses of hearing, taste, and smell has been carefully studied by M. Heitler. The sphygmograph showed a distinct acceleration in the pulse-rate of ward patients when a noisy street-car passed the windows, and the same effect was also observed when other sounds were produced. It was found that a clanging sound was followed by a greater acceleration than that produced by other disturbances, and, moreover, that high notes had more effect than deep tones. Tests made on the sense of smell showed that vinegar

and camphorated oil produced an increase, whereas turpentine, alcohol, and benzine were followed by a depression in the pulse-rate. Concentrated solutions of various substances placed on the tongue disclosed that sugar and salt produced an acceleration, vinegar and quinine a depression, in the pulse. These observations were made in over two hundred patients."

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**COUGH.**—The *New York and Philadelphia Medical Journal* has an abstract of an article in the *British Medical Journal* on this subject: "Smith divides coughs into two classes only: (1) the cough useful and (2) the cough ornamental or useless. The useful cough should be encouraged, the one that is useless should, if possible, be checked. Among the causes of coughs are plugs of wax in the ear, pharyngotonsillar troubles, the specific febrile diseases, diphtheria, laryngeal and tracheal troubles, gastric disorders, and, finally, diseases of the lungs. The author goes into the question of diagnosis of causes and the information to be obtained from the history of the case. For nearly everything except actual trouble in the mouth gargles are practically useless. A 1 in 60 lotion of carbolic acid is a very useful application to the posterior pharynx in cases of relaxed throat. Potassium iodide is more useful for adults than for children in assisting cough. Belladonna gives better results in children than almost any other drug."

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**THE DIGESTIBILITY OF PEAS PREPARED WITH HARD WATER.**—The *Interstate Medical Journal* says: "It has long been known that water rich in lime or magnesium salts (so-called 'hard' water) is unsuitable for the boiling of certain foods, such as vegetables, tea, coffee, etc. The cause of this observation has been sought in an investigation undertaken in Professor Rubner's laboratory with special regard to peas. It was found that when prepared with hard water small, hard fragments of the vegetable were formed which were insoluble in the digestive fluids and which appeared unaltered in the stools. They not only escaped utilization in the economy, but on account of the earthy-albuminates and earthy-soaps they contained acted as irritants, producing flatulence, colic with diarrhœa, and a foul-smelling stool."

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**OCULAR HEADACHES.**—The *New York and Philadelphia Medical Journal* gives a synopsis of a paper in *Presse Medicale* as follows: "Trousseau says that when drugs fail to relieve headache, particularly in the young, an ocular examination will generally reveal the cause, usually astigmatism or hyperopia, but sometimes muscular insufficiency. Neurasthenia and hysteria may often be traced to ametropia. Several cases are cited."

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**SCURVY IN INFANTS.**—William F. Cheney in an article in the *Medical News* says that there are three things to be done for the relief of this condition: discontinue the proprietary food; substitute for it fresh milk diluted with water or oatmeal water; give fresh orange-juice, one or two teaspoonfuls three times a day; give freshly squeezed beef-juice, the same amount, three times a day. Give no drugs.

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**FOR BALDNESS.**—*Journal des praticiens* has this prescription: Acetic acid, one gramme (fifteen minims); chloral, five grammes (seventy-five grains); ether, thirty grammes (one ounce). Use in the morning, after a shampoo with soap.